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(71) Applicant(s)

Daniel John Prunty

Stonepark, County Longford, Ireland

(72) Inventor(s)

Daniel John Prunty

(74) Agent and/or Address for Service

Marks & Clerk

57-60 Lincoln's Inn Fields, LONDON, WC2A 3LS,
United Kingdom

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US 5009082 A

US 4674296 A

(58) Field of Search

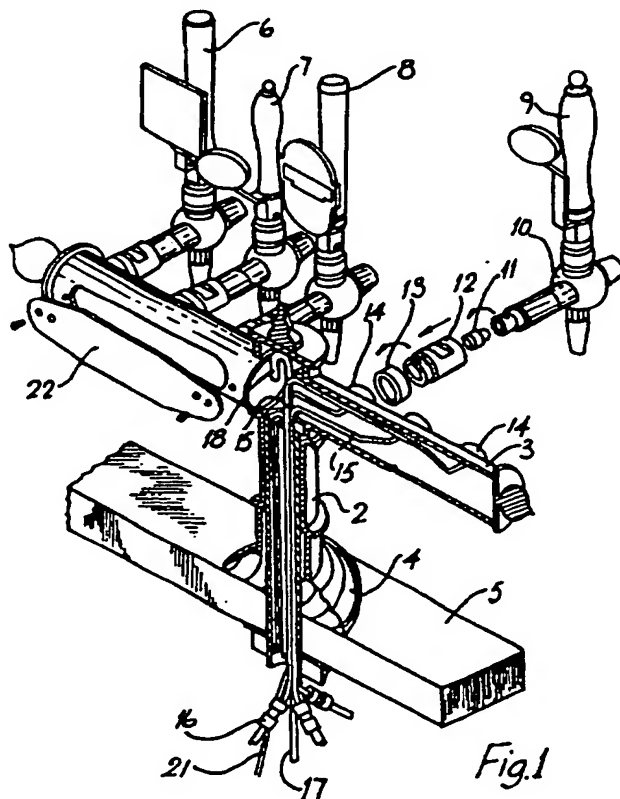
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ONLINE:WPI

(54) Draught Beer Tap Holders

(57) A beer font (1) has a hollow upright (2) with a crossmember (3) above a counter-engaging pedestal (4). Beer lines (15) are housed within the upright (2) and crossmember (3) terminating in beer taps (9) mounted on the cross-member (3). A feed conduit (17) from a beer cooler and a return conduit (18) are also housed within the upright (2) to circulate cooling water from the beer cooler through the upright (2) to chill beer in the beer lines (15).



At least one drawing originally filed was informal and the print reproduced here is taken from a later filed formal copy.

This print takes account of replacement documents submitted after the date of filing to enable the application to comply with the formal requirements of the Patents Rules 1995

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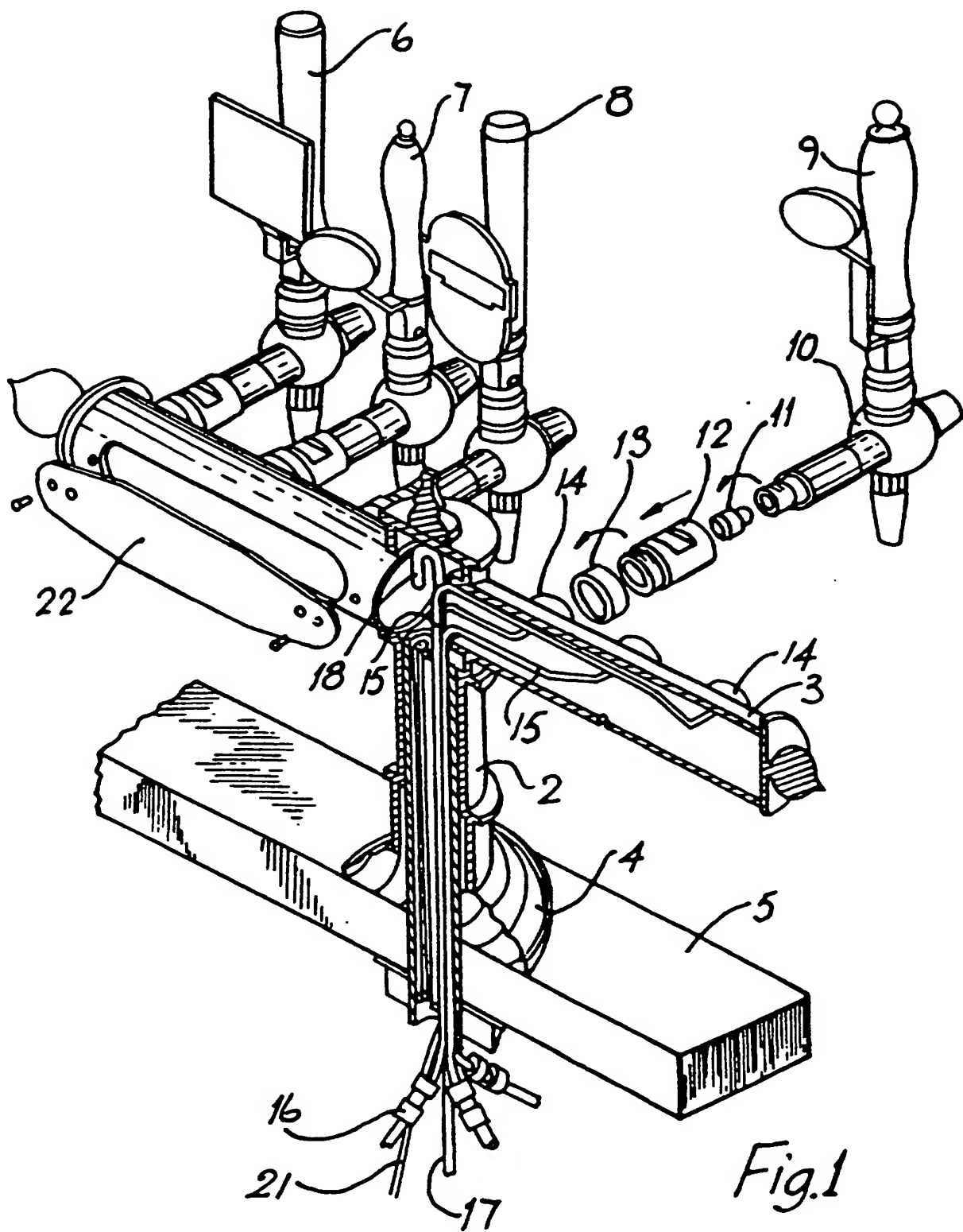


Fig. 1

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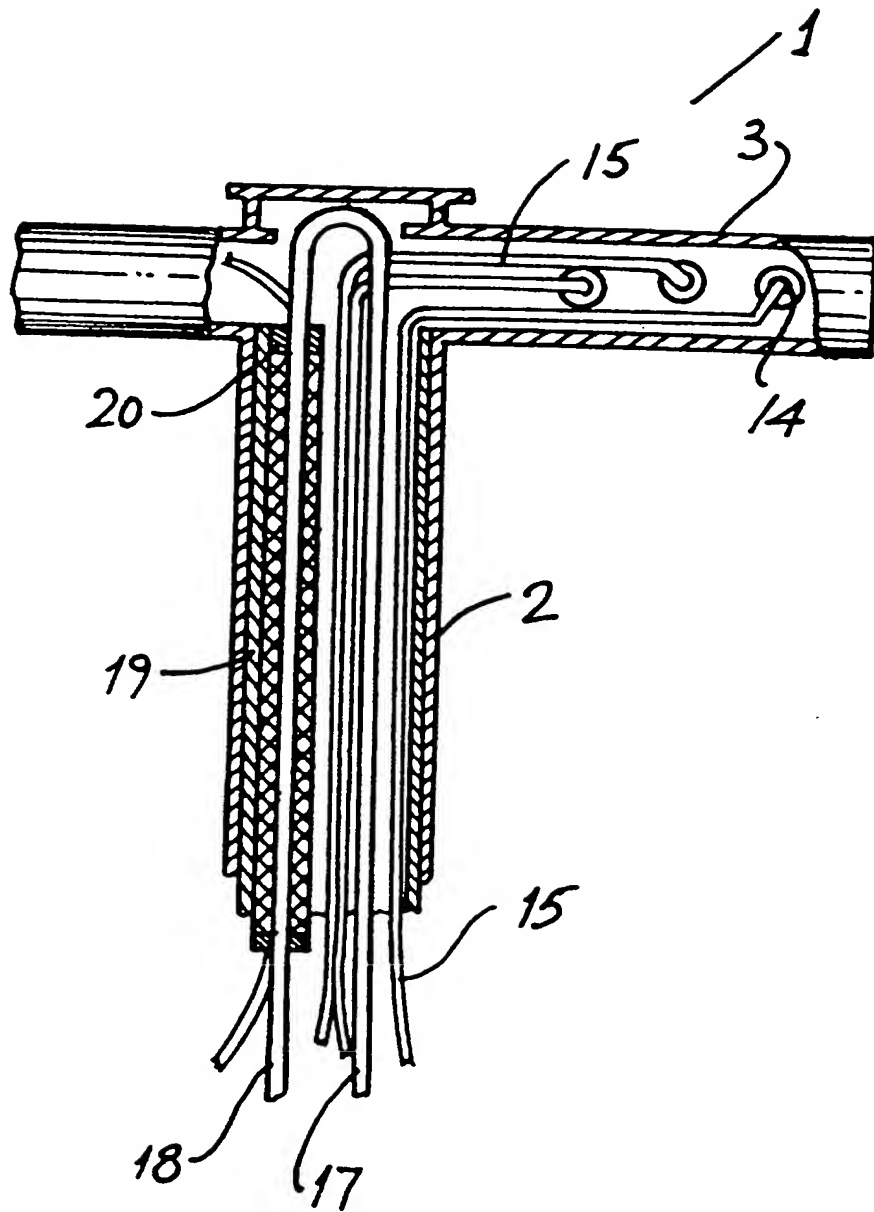


Fig. 2

"Draught Beer Tap Holders"

The present invention relates to draught beer tap holders of the type having a hollow support member for external mounting of a tap and for internal reception of a beer line for delivery of beer from a beer cooler. Such draught beer tap holders are commonly referred to as beer fonts.

Such beer fonts are particularly advantageous for mounting on bar tops in that more than one beer tap can be mounted on the beer font facilitating the pouring of draught beer.

10 There are however certain drawbacks with present known constructions of beer fonts. It is known that if beer is to be drunk at its best it is essential that the beer be served at the correct temperature. Indeed if certain beers are served at the wrong temperature, they leave an
15 exceedingly unpleasant taste in the drinker's mouth. It has long been known that not alone is the taste of beer affected by its serving temperature, but also the aromas given off by the beer. Since sensory perception is one of the major factors in eating and drinking the lack of the
20 correct aroma from the beer can make the beer appear too "sharp" or "flabby". Scientific studies have reinforced the general instinct of drinkers in respect of this. It is known for example that in some instances the sharper the beer the more important it is to have the beer
25 correctly chilled.

Towards this achieving this, most places where draught beer is served now incorporate a beer cooler which is mounted intermediate the cask storing the beer and the beer tap. However, there is generally speaking a
30 relatively long beer line between the beer tap and the beer cooler. Thus, in many instances the first glass or

so of beer drawn off at the beginning of each day effectively has to be disposed of. Also, if a particular beer line is not in constant use the beer will warm up between the beer cooler and the tap, so that when the draught beer is drawn off from the tap, it is not being served at the optimum temperature. Thus, paradoxically, beers that require care in their pouring such as draught stouts are often better in a busy premises where less time is spent on the pouring than where the bar staff has more time available.

The present invention is directed towards overcoming this problem and additionally to providing a more efficient construction of beer font.

According to the invention there is provided a beer font of the type comprising a hollow support member for external mounting of a beer dispensing tap and for internal reception of a beer line for delivery of beer from a beer cooler to the tap, characterised in that the hollow support member incorporates a cooling liquid conduit connected to the beer cooler lying adjacent the beer line. The advantage of this is that once the beer cooler is in operation all the beer, not just simply that passing through the cooler, but the beer within the beer line between the cooler and the tap will be at the optimum temperature.

Ideally the beer line is in contact with the cooling liquid conduit. The advantage of this is that the closer the contact between the cooling liquid conduit and the beer line, the greater will be the heat transfer.

Preferably the cooling liquid conduit extends to adjacent the beer dispensing tap to which the beer line is

connected. This will ensure that every portion of the beer line is chilled.

5 In one particular embodiment of the invention the hollow support member carries a plurality of internally transversely arranged bored support discs through which the beer line and the cooling liquid conduit project. The advantage of this is that the support discs maintain the beer lines spaced apart from the exterior of the font and in close contact together and with the cooling liquid conduit.

10 In one embodiment of the invention the hollow support member comprises an upright portion and an interconnecting cross member for mounting the beer dispensing tap. This is a particularly suitable construction of beer font as it allows a plurality of taps to be used without obstructing the counter-top to which the beer font will generally be mounted. When the construction is of this form, the cross-member incorporates an access hatch for maintenance. It is particularly advantageous to be able to access the beer lines and tap without dismantling the whole beer font.

15 Preferably the hollow support member has a condensate drain-off pipe. Because of the chilling there will obviously be condensate within the beer font and if the condensate were not to be bled off, then undoubtedly there would be a less than hygienic situation.

20 Preferably the hollow support member is thermally insulated and ideally is filled with a thermal insulation material in the form of a hollow body member through which the beer line and cooling conduit project. The advantage of this is that the beer font is even further insulated from the ambient conditions and this will additionally

ensure that the beer is kept chilled and arrives out of the tap in the optimum condition.

Detailed Description of the Invention

5 The invention will be more clearly understood from the following description of an embodiment thereof given by way of example only with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:-

Fig. 1 is an exploded partially cut-away view of a beer font according to the invention; and

10 Fig. 2 is a front cross-sectional view of portion of the beer font.

Referring to the drawings, there is illustrated a beer font indicated generally by the reference numeral 1, comprising a hollow upright 2 supporting a cross member 3 and terminating in a counter-engaging pedestal 4 which is
15 is illustrated mounted on portion of a counter top 5. There is illustrated a plurality of beer taps 6, 7, 8 and 9. The beer tap 9 is shown in exploded construction and comprising a conventional pump 10 shown separated from a
20 hose connector 11 for mounting on a beer line (not shown). The pump 10 is in turn mounted by a brass connector 12 and locking ring 13 which engages a threaded connector 14 on the cross member 3 through which runs a beer line. A number of beer lines 15 are illustrated and are
25 illustrated terminating in conventional connectors 16.

A feed conduit 17 from the beer cooler (not shown) and a return conduit 18 are illustrated and are arranged to deliver cooling water through the hollow upright 2 and back down to the beer cooler. All of the return conduit
30 18 is for clarity not shown in Fig. 1. The interior of

the upright 2 carries insulating material 19, held in position by a pair of nylon locator discs 20 each of which is bored to receive the beer lines and feed conduits 17 and 18. A water drain-off pipe 21 is provided for condensate. Removable plates 22 to allow access for installation and service are provided in the cross member 3 and may advantageously form name plates.

In use the beer in the beer lines 15 is kept chilled by the water being delivered from the beer cooler through the feed conduit 17 and return conduit 18.

Further discs similar to the locator disc 20 may be provided within the upright 2 to keep the beer lines 15 in contact with the cooling conduit.

Ideally as illustrated each locator disc 20 is so bored that the beer lines and cooling liquid feed conduit are in close contact while the feed return to the cooler is maintained separate therefrom.

It is envisaged that instead of the conduit merely lying within the hollow upright 2 that it may also lie within the cross member 3, thus further improving the cooling of the beer. Then further locator discs 20 may be used.

It is also envisaged that the cross member 3 may be filled with insulation material.

The invention is not limited to the embodiment hereinbefore described which may be varied in both construction and detail.

CLAIMS

1. A beer font of the type comprising a hollow support member for external mounting of a beer dispensing tap and for internal reception of a beer line for delivery of beer from a beer cooler to the tap, characterised in that the hollow support member incorporates a cooling liquid conduit connected to the beer cooler lying adjacent the beer line.
5
2. A beer font as claimed in claim 1 in which the beer line is in contact with the cooling liquid conduit.
- 10 3. A beer font as claimed in claim 1 or 2 in which the cooling liquid conduit extends to adjacent the beer dispensing tap to which the beer line is connected.
- 15 4. A beer font as claimed in any preceding claim in which the hollow support member carries a plurality of internally transversely arranged bored support discs through which the beer line and the cooling liquid conduit project.
- 20 5. A beer font as claimed in any preceding claim in which the hollow support member comprises an upright portion and an interconnecting cross member for mounting the beer dispensing tap.
6. A beer font as claimed in claim 5 in which the cross member incorporates an access hatch for maintenance.
- 25 7. A beer font as claimed in any preceding claim in which the hollow support member has a condensate drain-off pipe.

8. A beer font as claimed in any preceding claim in which the hollow support member is thermally insulated.
- 5 9. A beer font as claimed in claim 8 in which the hollow support member is filled with a thermal insulation material in the form of a hollow body member through which the beer line and cooling conduit project.
- 10 10. A beer font substantially as described herein with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.